

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE OF THE SELECTION POLICY

- A. The purpose of this Selection Policy is to guide the Library Director and the staff involved in materials selection, and to inform the public about the principles and practices upon which selections are made.
- B. The goal of the Harvard Public Library is to provide a full range of library services to the entire Harvard community. To this end, it strives for a carefully chosen collection, creative programming, and an imaginative use of varied information and communication media. It provides books, periodicals, printed matter, multimedia and Internet materials for users of all ages who seek information, education, enrichment, or entertainment. The Library has a responsibility to offer a wide spectrum of information and attitudes to the public.

2. OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

- A. The library strives to maintain its permanent collection by acquiring material that is of historical, literary, or practical worth. Selection is a judgmental and interpretive process involving a general knowledge of the subject and its important literature; a familiarity with the materials in the collection; an awareness of the bibliographies of the subject; and recognition of the needs of the community.
- B. Library materials should be chosen for values of interest, information, and enlightenment to the user. The Library should make the fullest practicable provision of material presenting all points of views concerning the problems and issues of our times—international, national, and local. Materials will not be proscribed or removed from the library's shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. In no case should any material be excluded because of the race, the nationality, or the political or religious views of the writer.
- C. Purchases for the Library are made on the basis of recommendations in library journals, professional and literary magazines, publishers' trade magazines, newspaper reviews, and from the public.
- D. The general criteria for purchase are readability, price, popular appeal, timeliness, significance of the author, political and social significance, and permanent value of the material. Each title is judged as a whole, and isolated passages in themselves are not used as criteria. No material shall be judged for exclusion by taking isolated passages out of context and basing condemnation of that material on such passages.
- E. All users are encouraged to make suggestions on collection development and requests for specific materials, which will be given careful consideration in light of overall collection

needs, selection criteria, and budget constraints. Because of space and budget considerations, and consistent with our mission, the collection of the Harvard Public Library cannot strive to be comprehensive in all areas, except for Harvard History. Emphasis in collection development will be on providing a strong balanced collection to meet most of recreational, informational, and reference requirements of Harvard residents. Requests for materials in greater depth or number than may be appropriate for our collection will be processed through inter-library loans.

3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The Board of Trustees formulates policies for the selection of all materials within the broad framework of the objectives and purposes of the Library. The Trustees delegate the responsibility of implementing material selection policies to the Library Director, who will ensure that staff members purchase materials in conformance with these policies.

4. SELECTION IN SPECIALIZED OR CONTROVERSIAL AREAS

- A. Selection policies in fields such as politics, religion, sex, and sociology are sometimes subject to criticism. The Harvard Public Library bases its selection policy upon the following principle: that the Library has a responsibility to provide for the community the unorthodox as well as the accepted, new forms of expression as well as traditional ones. Each user is privileged to select freely among the materials the Library has purchased. The Library leaves to parents the job of determining what materials are appropriate for their child.
- B. The Board of Trustees of the Harvard Public Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to View Statement, and Freedom to Read Statement, as set forth by the American Library Association. (These documents appear in the appendices of the HPL Policy Manual.)
- C. Funds do not permit unlimited purchase of specialized research, scholarly, or highly technical materials, and no attempt will be made to supply textbooks or other curriculum-related materials used in the schools and colleges of the area, except as such materials also serve the general public.
- D. Any resident of the Town of Harvard who has a concern regarding the selection of a specific title is welcome to discuss the interpretation of these principles with the Library Director. Should the resident desire further discussion, the resident should send a written communication to the Board of Trustees. The Board will review the concern following these procedures.

5. DONATIONS

The Library welcomes donation of books and materials, with the understanding that the same criteria of selection will be applied before adding donated materials to the collection. If not added to the collection, donated materials will be given to the Friends of Harvard Public Library Book Sale.

6. WITHDRAWALS FROM THE COLLECTION

Systematic removal, or weeding, of materials no longer useful to the collection is essential in maintaining the purpose and quality of resources. Weeding is as important as original selection, and the same criteria are applied to assure the development of a timely, high-quality collection.

7. RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIAL

Items purchased, or accepted as gifts, using the Collection Development Policy and selection criteria, will not be automatically removed on request. The following procedure for Reconsideration of Library Material is in effect: Criticism or request for reconsideration of library material should be presented to the Library Director in writing on the "Patron's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form. This form is available at the library. The Board of Trustees and the Library Director will review all complaints. Findings will depend upon a majority decision of the committee. That decision will be based upon merit of the work in question as a whole, not on excerpts from the work. Further appeal may be made if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at this level. Furthermore, only residents of the Town of Harvard may submit a formal Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials. Patrons looking to submit request for reconsideration will need to provide proof of residency.